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Lawyers Seek to Block

Iran-Contra Wrap-Up Said to Criticize Some

By Walter Pincus
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Lawyers representing some individuals criticized in the final report of Iran-contra prosecutor Lawrence E. Walsh are trying to determine what they can do to prevent publication of at least part of the 700-page volume, according to informed sources.

Although the report is still secret, it is said to be highly critical of many officials in the Reagan administration, including former attorney general Edwin Meese III, defense secretary Caspar W. Weinberger and former presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush, the sources said.

Complicating the situation is the secrecy surrounding not only the report but also the gag order that has been placed over those directly involved in the matter by the special panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals controlling Walsh's office of the independent counsel.

Some lawyers with clients in the nearly 7-year-old investigation see the behind-the-scenes maneuvering as the final attempt to humiliate the 81-year-old Walsh, who they claim has misused his office to harass Reagan administration officials.

"He has written down allegations he can't prove," said one source

familiar with the report, "and put the worst patina on everything."

Said another: "Walsh is using this [the final report] to have the last word on Iran-contra."

Walsh himself remains on the federal payroll on a per diem basis as independent counsel as long as the controversy over the report continues. His secretary in Oklahoma City answers the office telephone saying, "Office of the independent counsel," though Walsh declines to describe his activities now in that role because of the court's gag order. In his Washington office, administrative staff members are preparing records to be sent to the National Archives.

One Washington attorney, who asked to remain anonymous, said he was aware of several lawyers with clients mentioned in Walsh's report who want corrections or deletions made.

"I don't know what procedure we may use," one of those attorneys said.

Another attorney with a client cited in the report said he just wants to have a response printed in the Walsh document.

Walsh's final report was prepared under a provision of the independent counsel law that required him, before terminating his office, to set forth "fully and completely a description of the work of the inde-

Portions of Walsh Report

Reagan Aides; Panel to Rule on Its Release

pendent counsel, including the disposition of all cases brought and the reasons for not prosecuting any matter" that fell within his jurisdiction.

The report was given to the special three-judge appellate court panel that includes Judge David B. Sentelle of the D.C. Circuit, Judge John D. Butsner of the 4th U.S. Circuit in Richmond and Judge Joseph T. Sneed of the 9th U.S. Circuit in San Francisco. The judges have the authority to release to the public "such portions of the report" as they consider "appropriate," according to the independent counsel law.

In determining that, the panel is

permitted to make available to those named in the report the portions that refer to them and receive "any comments or factual information that such individual may submit," according to the statute. In turn, the court may include such material "in whole or in part . . . as an appendix to such final report," the statute reads.

There is no provision in the law for someone mentioned to seek to remove material from the report.

Lawyers representing Reagan and others have been given until early December to submit comments on the sections of the report dealing with their clients.